



The roles of artists' collective in the Gdansk Shipyard's heritage protection

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Abstract

Purpose – The main objective of this paper is to analyse the roles of the artists' collective in the creation of socially shared knowledge, concerning Gdansk Shipyard's heritage protection during the urban regeneration process over last ten years, since 2002.

Design/methodology/approach – The empirical section of the paper is based on a single case study concerning the artists' collective's ability to build a complex network of social relations, to research cultural heritage of the Gdansk Shipyard, to translate this knowledge into symbolic languages through art-based work and to transmit knowledge to the wider public with an aim to engage in an open dialogic public communication.

Findings – The case study draws on insights from participant observation carried out on the premises of the Gdansk Shipyard between years 2000 and 2008 and interviews with individual artists from the collective, conducted between years 2004 and 2006. Data was also drawn from archival research. The exposure in public media was also examined over last ten years, including Internet websites as well as newspapers and magazines' content.

Research limitations/implications – The case study research indicates that methods and techniques applied by the artists' collective in researching the shipyard's historical heritage and communicating their findings to the wider public have been more effective than the official planning methods of expert-led post-industrial urban regeneration. Over the last ten years, the artists have succeeded to transform the negative perceptions about the values of the shipyard's cultural heritage and engaged local citizens in the preservation of the historical identities of the place. In 2012, the Mayor of Gdansk has invited representatives of the artists' collective to the newly established Young City Stakeholders' Board in order to utilize their knowledge of the shipyard's cultural heritage and their capacity to mediate between various groups involved in urban regeneration planning process as well as to communicate with the wider public.

Practical implications – Despite persistent views in literature that equate public engagement in the planning process of urban regeneration with a kind of "modern utopia", we argue that participatory process is not only possible in practice but also can be highly effective and democratically ethical.

Keywords Community participation, Heritage preservation, Industrial heritage, Participatory planning, Sustainable urban planning

Paper type Case study

1. Introduction

The urban regeneration planning refers to a transformation process aiming at sustainable improvement of built environment as well as social and economic wellbeing, quality of life and of public realm. We argue that one of its key challenges is to reconcile economic growth with preservation of local cultural identity (Evans and Shaw, 2004). For that, urban regeneration planning process requires the public access to local planning and policy making. Widening access to planning and involvement of local communities in the process can be facilitated through participatory arts-led approaches. The paper's objective is to analyse the role of the artists' collective during the urban regeneration process of the Gdansk Shipyard over



last ten years in the knowledge creation, altering common perceptions about the heritage value of this place.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Gdansk Shipyard was a source of regional socio-economic power and the largest employer for local communities. The original nineteenth and twentieth century industrial infrastructure survived the Second World War bombardment of Gdansk. The post-war Gdansk became a place of resistance against the Communist regime that involved shipyard workers. In 1980, Solidarity led by Lech Walesa was established here as the first independent trade union in then the Soviet Block, commencing so-called Solidarity Revolution that eventually resulted in the abolishment of Berlin Wall and subsequent systemic changes across Central European countries. In June 2004, the historical boards with 21 postulates of the protesting shipyard's workers were added to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Paradoxically, in 1995 the shipyard went bankrupt and four years later more than half of its grounds were bought out by two American investment funds, managed by the land development company Synergia 99 with an aim to transform this area into a new, modern central waterfront district of Gdansk called the Young City (Sebastyanski, 2003). The shipbuilding industry has been concentrated in the remaining area, now owned by the Ukrainian consortium ISD (75 per cent) and the Polish Ministry of Treasury (25 per cent) (Sebastyanski, 2011).

The paper examines the urban regeneration planning process of the Gdansk Shipyard with a focus on aspects of cultural heritage with an aim of capturing main differences between the official approach of the expert-led urban planning process and the alternative approach led by the artists' collective.

The empirical section of the paper is based on a single case study analysing the role of artists' collective in urban regeneration planning process, with a particular focus on cultural heritage. The study draws on insights from interviews with artists conducted between years 2004 and 2006 and participant observation carried out on the premises of Gdansk Shipyard between 2000 and 2008. The interviews focused on methods and techniques used by artists to create a publicly shared knowledge about the importance of the shipyard's heritage. Observations were centred on the organizational aspects of artists' activities. Data were also drawn from archival research. Documentation and literature concerning the post-shipyard urban regeneration planning process as well as artists' activities in the Gdansk Shipyard was examined between 2002 and 2012, including analysis of plans and projects' descriptors, operational programmes, exhibitions catalogues and associated publications. The exposure in public media was also examined, including internet web sites, newspapers and magazines. The purpose of analysing archival sources of information was to capture the main differences between the official approach of the expert-led urban planning process and the alternative approach of the artists' collective. Media-generated data revealed insights into the public response to artistic activities and artists' influence over the general views concerning the shipyard's heritage preservation.

2. Critique of the mainstream planning and the evolution of more radical-participative methods

One of the key criticism against official planning policies, conceived after Second World War, was launched in the late 1950s in Paris by urban-artistic movement, called Situationist International led by Guy Debord. Situationists criticized dominating and controlling system of bureaucratic capitalism compared by Debord to a "ruling spectacle" with its reification and instrumentalization of reason which reduces everyone to a

passive, isolated consumer. They called for intervention, proposing community-based active engagement and developed a theory and practice of a unitary urbanism; an urban social network aiming at collective transformation through combined use of participatory arts and other techniques, including psychogeography, urban drift, constructing situations and urban detournements (Knabb, 2006).

In the USA, widespread critique and resistance to post-war official urban planning was initiated by journalist and urban activist Jane Jacobs in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961). She argued that official “rationalist” top-down planning methods were based on deductive reasoning which did not respect the needs of local communities. Her criticism was supported by sociologist Herbert Gans (1962) who stated that the architectural roots of planning need to be replaced by an understanding of behavioral sciences, particularly that of urban sociology. Jacobs proposed ideas and actions to improve urban planning with increased role of local culture and social capital (Flint, 2009). She then organized successful grassroots efforts to protect existing neighborhoods, such as New York City’s Greenwich Village, against plans to build the Lower Manhattan Expressway directly through Washington Square Park in 1968.

By the end of 1960s, as the civil rights movements swept across the western world, criticism of mainstream planning methods became a norm. In the USA Alan Altshuler (1966), an academic and government official, demonstrated that so-called “rational-comprehensive” plans were neither rational nor comprehensive and instead, politically powerful groups deeply influenced city plans to suit their specific interests, which deviated from the general public interest of urban residents. In Great Britain, Paul Barker, journalist and writer in collaboration with architects and urban planners: Rayner Banham, Peter Hall and Cedric Price challenged physical planning orthodoxy by calling for resistance to imposed aesthetics, promoting a playful civil participation in shaping urban living environments in their paper “Non-plan: an experiment in freedom”, published in *New Society* magazine in 1969 (Huges and Sadler, 2000).

In 1973, the first book in planning theory with word “radical” in the title was written by two American academics Allen Heskin and Stephen Grabow. In their book *Foundations for a Radical Concept of Planning* the authors offered a critique of the official, bureaucratic planning methods as centralized, elitist, based on dominance as well as change-resistant and proposed instead, a new paradigm based on concepts of decentralized and communal society, facilitation of human development and participation as well as consideration of ecological issues (McConnell, 1981).

The operational method and practice of radical planning for the recovery of collective self-reliant political community and the self-production of life outside of the political terrain held by the state and the corporate capital were developed by John Friedmann (1987) in his book *Planning in the Public Domain: From Knowledge to Action*. He defines radical planning as self-organized practice that depends for its effectiveness on interpersonal relations based on trust. As a result of the participative planning process more individuals and groups can link up together, generating more political power based on a synergic self-empowerment. The social organization engaged in planning requires the means to access to the bases of social political power including informal networks and relevant information. The provisional and ephemeral knowledge for radical practice comes from communication which is mostly discursive. This communicative knowledge, aiming to reach a critical understanding, is socially produced and for that it is necessarily contextual; embedded in specific local social values and norms as well as more flexible for local experimentation (Friedmann, 1987).

Since the 1980s, urban regeneration planning methods have started to evolve from top-down and government-led focused predominantly on built environment to bottom-up and community-led approaches focused on local public. In the 1990s, the notion of active participation has replaced the notion of access, determined more in consumption terms by adding a dimension of empowerment. Also at that time, more emergent methods of culture-led regeneration appeared where the role of culture in the official planning processes moved away from applications centred on built environment, such as iconic cultural landmarks or creative industries quarters, and turning more towards community involvement through arts. This evolution has partly been influenced by the emergence of new communication technologies, with the Internet in particular (Evans and Shaw, 2004).

However, the effectiveness of official culture-led regeneration strategies, based on physical development of a new flagship cultural institution (e.g. Guggenheim in Bilbao, Lowry Centre in Manchester or Tate Modern in London) or the entire cultural quarters (e.g. El Raval in Barcelona, Rope Walks Quarter in Liverpool, or Nottingham's Lace Market) have been widely questioned. The criticism points to such problems as gentrification and erasing local histories by commercial "culturally-led" schemes based on the patterns of marketization and consumerism (Miles, 2005). More populist cultural policies lead to "a growing banality and impoverishment where the critical potential and emancipatory dimension of the cultural experience based on the articulation of real experiences and problems was eliminated in favor of a false participation" (Ribalta, 2004). Similar criticisms can be applied to more participatory approaches to culture-led urban regeneration planning that engage artists and consult wider public but only at the stage when the experts-led decisions on spatial and economic issues are already made. Musgrave and Cumberlidge argue that cultural, ecological and community concerns tend to be addressed secondarily rather than integrated with the planning process which results in unimaginative, short-term thinking (Miessen and Basar, 2006).

Thus, successful culturally-led urban regeneration planning process needs to be holistic, multidisciplinary and involve local community (Miessen and Basar, 2006). An alternative approach can be offered by participatory artists-led strategy which can suggest symbols and metaphors for transformation in the search of common identity of a place and have a positive impact on local image of a place, inspiring a vision for desired transformations (Evans and Shaw, 2004). Social media and mobile communication technologies may facilitate personalized communities that communicate simultaneously in virtual and real spaces.

3. The case of the Gdansk Shipyard's regeneration

The planning process of the urban regeneration for the Gdansk Shipyard was initiated in 1995. The Municipality of Gdansk asked the experts from Architectural and Urban Planning Department of Gdansk Technical University to prepare analysis of the city centre's potential for expansion towards the shipyard area. In their "Development study of the northern part of Gdansk City Center" the experts outlined opportunities for Gdansk to extend its inner city towards the waterfront through the series of new urban public spaces and identified historic, cultural and symbolic values of the post-shipyard area related to the industrial traditions and the Solidarity's movement as potentials for a success of such development (Kochanowski *et al.*, 1996).

In 1999, another group of experts commissioned by Synergia 99 prepared "The Heritage Conservation Analysis" of the Gdansk Shipyard's most valuable historical objects. The experts selected only 17 buildings (out of around 100) and analysed them

from the perspective of architectural history, ignoring the essential, in the context of post-industrial plant, technological issues (including machinery and equipment, like cranes, overhead cranes, slipways, etc.). Paradoxically, they also allowed eventual pulling down more than half of initially selected buildings including the unique example of the Director's Villa, which combined representative and residential functions. This villa was an integral part of the nineteenth century Imperial Shipyard complex, postulated to be listed and preserved (Kochanowski *et al.*, 1996).

In 2000, Synergia 99 contracted the experts from urban and architectural design company Sasaki Associates from Boston to prepare the Vision Master Plan for the Gdansk Shipyard's regeneration. Sasaki regarded the shipyard's land as unique not only in the national but also international context, due to its rich cultural values. It was agreed that in order to provide a competitive edge from the marketing point of view, the project has to save, emphasize and enhance the local identity values, including, post-industrial infrastructure. Sasaki also proposed to locate the European Solidarity Center at the front of the Solidarity Square; as the educational, scientific and research institute and the Promenade of Freedom, a passage which would began at the historical Gate No. 2 at the Solidarity Square and leading towards the water – passing by the BHP hall where Lech Walesa signed the so-called August Agreements with the Government Officials in 1980 (Sasaki Associates, 2000).

The new land-use plan for the Young City has been approved by the Gdansk City Council in 2004. Unfortunately, the plan is of a general nature and ambiguous with regard to the issues of heritage preservation, especially post-industrial aspects.

Paradoxically, the rich industrial heritage of the Gdansk Shipyard aroused more of the global interest. In 2005, the international conference "Heritage of Technology – Gdansk Outlook 4" was organized by the Gdansk Technical University. Among the conference participants was Laurent Levi-Strauss, at that time the head of the UNESCO department for cultural heritage in Paris, specializing in heritage of technology. The participants prepared collectively: "The resolution on the world value of the Gdansk Shipyard", emphasizing its value as the birth place of Solidarity and "a complex of 19th century shipyards unique in Europe and the world, showing their development from the early industrial period to modern times" (Affelt and Wittbrodt, 2005). To ensure harmonious co-operation between planned transformation of the shipyard areas and the protection of world cultural heritage and its development, the experts postulated preparation of so called "conservation management plan" which would encompass the most valuable elements such as cranes, dry docks, workshops, machinery as well as working life (Affelt and Wittbrodt, 2005).

In order to gain a positive response of Gdansk's citizens towards the envisioned transformations, in 2001 Synergia 99 invited artists into shipyard's premises, offering them space for inspiration and a place to live and work. In 2002, the group of about 20 artists adapted the former telephone exchange building called Centrala for workshops and studios, a small independent art gallery and an informal club. In the same year, a cultural organization Wyspa, with a group of associated artists took over the small hall at the shipyard's premises, called Modelarnia, and transformed it into an exhibition space. The artists researched the unique specificity of the Gdansk Shipyard and engaged in various social and political interventions concerning planned urban regeneration with a use of independent media. This diverse and creative network was integrated into the internet platform of cooperation between artists and the public (Sebastyaniski, 2010). In 2004 Wyspa has established The Art Institute in the building of former shipbuilding vocational school. This complex collective of artists and art

institutions that relocated into the premises of the Gdansk Shipyard acquired a name of the “Artists’ Colony”.

Despite the emerging discourse concerning heritage value of the shipyard, in 2006, Synergia 99 sold most of the land to a few developers, mainly Baltic Property Trust from Denmark. Since that time, many of industrial buildings have been demolished, including director’s villa and few halls of the Imperial Shipyard due to the planned development of a transit road cutting through the area. Also, cranes and other elements of post-industrial infrastructure started to disappear from the premises (Plate 1).

4. Participative process of common and shared social knowledge creation

One of the biggest challenges for the artistic colonizers of the Gdansk Shipyard was finding out how to engage with its unique identity and how to translate their research into artworks as well as disseminate the results to the wider public. Participative actions of the Artists’ Colony encompassed a sphere of public awareness; actions were carried out at the three, mutually integrated levels: exploration of the shipyard’s contexts, translating the study results into artworks and transmission into the wider public.

4.1 Exploration

The first steps of every planning process are aimed at identification of a specific knowledge base, concerning existing conditions of the place and their historical roots as well as potential options for their transformations. Similarly, the artists in the Gdansk Shipyard have based their works on initial quests aimed at discovering the shipyard’s identity that constitute its *genius loci* and cultural heritage.

For the photographer Michał Szlaga, his artistic colonization of the shipyard was an opportunity to observe and grasp a sense of diversity of a place. First, he got involved in analysing the monumentality of the industrial plant itself; its halls, cranes, slipways and the complex processes of shipbuilding. Being able to live and work at the shipyard’s premises, he documented on-going changes against historical traces of the industrial era. Second, he began to engage with working people on the premises. For sometime, he worked as a hull painter at the part of the shipyard in operation. Meetings with shipbuilders enabled him to acquire valuable knowledge about working lives. He continues his explorations of the shipyard’s changes and argues that the most



Source: Photograph: Roman Sebastyanski

Plate 1.
Demolition of
Director's Villa

important is a sense of continuous discovery while documenting fast-paced material and systemic transformations (Szłaga, 2005).

Over the years, since its formation in 2004, the Wyspa Art Institute has attempted to create critical methods and tools supporting artistic engagement in the complex planning processes of the post-shipyard transformation into a future waterfront central district of Gdansk. The Art Institute conducted a series of activities concerning long term, interdisciplinary research of the post-shipyard contexts involving and cooperating with specialists of different fields, including architects and urban planners. Their main objective was to counteract official political strategies that use historical heritage for propaganda and political manipulation. Understanding that the context produces meaning, the artists associated with the Art Institute have started exploring post-industrial specificities, translating the research results into another, more symbolic language and transmitting discovered meanings through various forms of social relations (Szyłak and Kłaman, 2007). For instance, in 2004, the Art Institute organized an international project entitled BHP (an abbreviation for Health and Safety of Work) where artists were invited to research the meanings and social relations concerning such concepts as “work” and “freedom” in the post-industrial contexts of the Gdansk Shipyard. Another of their projects, Dock Watchers (2005), was aimed at the study of changes in the Polish cultural memory related to opposition strikes in August 1980 (see Plate 2). Subsequently, the Wyspa Art Institute in co-operation with other international partner organizations such as Pro Helvetia, Espace Croise, IASPIS, Arts Linkor 18th Street Arts Complex, inaugurated an artist-in-residence programme under the title Wyspa AIR-Port aimed at artists’ exchanges and creation of an international research platform.

4.2 Translation

In the theory of planning, the research findings of exploration stage are subsequently processed and conceptualized, enabling a diagnosis of the existing situation as well as selecting scenarios for future actions. In order to effectively communicate this initial, conceptual resource, the planners utilize various “media” forms, such as charts, diagrams or drawings. The “planners” from the Artists’ Colony were also faced with the need to conceptualize their research findings. Subsequently, the artists “translated” their findings into forms allowing for communication with required audiences to emerge. Here below are the examples of how artists dealt with this issue of art making.

Photographer, Michal Szłaga in his series *Workers – Vanishing Professions* (2003) translated the production process of the shipbuilding through 12 black and white portraits of shipyard workers. As a result, a tale of shipbuilding emerged, through representation of individual roles, including a shipyard’s gate guard or a skipper taking out a newly built ship to the sea. His objective was to record and present shipyards workers occupations. In another’s of his shipyard series entitled *Xmas* (2003), the artist interprets the multidimensionality of the shipbuilding environment by showcasing intimate, festive moods such as, for example, decorations of Christmas time at the shipyard. In one of his photographs *Anna – The Proletarian* (2004), the former shipyard worker – a female operator of overhead crane – and one of the key figure of the 1980 opposition, is represented standing in the empty interior of the derelict shipyard hall, almost a quarter of a century after the August strikes. The image comments upon human helplessness against the forces of destruction of an industrial era which at the same time symbolizes an inevitable construction of something new – a forthcoming urban regeneration (see Plate 3). For the 25th anniversary of signing of the August Agreements in 1980 which established the Solidarity, Szłaga prepared the photographic series *Workers 1980 – Workers 2005*,



Source: Dock Watchers publication (2005). Curtsey of the
Institute Wyspa

Plate 2.
Cover page

translating heroic images of shipyard workers of Solidarity era into isolated and forgotten ordinary individuals still working for the Gdansk Shipyard.

Ideas of “recycling” physical spaces, social relations and memories associated with the transformation of the Gdansk Shipyard as well as concepts of work and freedom resulted in the BHP international conference and exhibition organized and hosted by the Wyspa Institute in 2004. It was a way of translating established meanings into a new kind of software which could be utilized in urban regeneration planning. A year later, at the Dock Watchers international conference and exhibition organized and hosted by the Institute, the similar recycling method was applied to memories and histories connected with the phenomenon of Solidarity movement. Emergent insights on the Solidarity movement associated with the Gdansk Shipyard transgressed the official myths, representations and included commemorations of more neglected visions as well as individual and subjective memories inscribed in a collective experience and its communicative tradition.



Source: Dock Watchers exhibition (2005). Photograph: Roman Sebastyanski

Plate 3.
Anna the Proletarian
(2004) by Michal Szlaga

4.3 Transmission

Planning in the democratic urban context involves the process of the public engagement. For that, the planning organization needs to present the outcomes of research and analysis to a wider public and at least consult the proposals of potential developments scenarios. As presented at the outset of the paper, the extent to which this public engagement is actually practiced appears problematic. An active engagement of citizens in the planning process, including the early stages of research and analysis in many professional and academic circles is still considered as a kind of utopia. Below, we present some of the examples of techniques used by the Artists' Colony collective aimed to inform the public about their research findings concerning the shipyard's context and to engage the public in transformative actions aimed at preservation of its local heritage.

In 2004, Iwona Zajac, a performance artist, completed her monumental mural entitled *Shipyard* on the 100 metres long wall located outside the shipyard's premises. On this wall, she included the fragments of her recorded interviews with the shipyard's workers who worked there for about 40 years and took part in the strikes resulting in establishment of the Solidarity (see Plate 4). In this work, the mural becomes a medium



Source: Photograph: Roman Sebastyanski

for the workers' voices, enabling them to communicate to the wider public through individual stories about their long-term working relationships with the place. Here is an extract from one of the stories:

I would like to work in the shipyard until retirement and that ships would still be built here. After all, there will always be some company that would like to buy them. Now, I am building a family home for myself and for my children who are grown up already. I like to make jokes and my fellows also like them. Concerning my dreams, I would like to go on holiday abroad. Not to work – but normally, to sightsee and meet other cultures. I would like to have a quiet retirement and get some rest[1].

In 2006, the Wyspa Art Institute created a dialogical platform in the form of workshops and debates to look for ideas on how to transform diverse cultural heritage potentials of the Gdansk Shipyard within the scheme of the urban regeneration planning process. Those workshops and debates engaged around one hundred representatives of local social circles. As the result of the discussions, the Operational Programme for Transformation of Young City area was developed, which formulates the mission and strategic objectives as well as the framework of their implementation. One of the fundamental conditions of potentially successful implementation of the Programme was the effective public participation in the planning process and control related to the development of the district by creating a democratic forum to exchange opinions (Lorens, 2006). Unfortunately this document has never been adopted in practice by official planning institutions.

5. Discussion and conclusions: shared knowledge

Despite the rhetoric of public officials as well as private businesses, concerning the need to protect and preserve the Gdansk Shipyard's unique heritage, the reality has proved something opposite. Over last ten years, many objects of the shipyard's infrastructure have been demolished without consulting the public. Only the artists and activists have attempted to engage Gdansk's citizens in discussions about the shipyard's heritage values, emphasizing a need for its preservation for future generations.

Artists' actions were realized through an expanded connectivity that forms multidimensional networks; the networks that are open and inherently discontinuous, flexible and mobile as well as unstable and unpredictable. Such an organizational form refers to what Deleuze and Guattari call rhizome in their book *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). The rhizomatic practice is based on the creation and utilization of alternative networks outside of the dominating system which cannot be

formally represented (Bove and Empson, 2002). This establishes foundations of equality and solidarity which is crucial in radical planning process (Hardt and Negri, 2001).

The Artists' Colony has succeeded in building a locally and nationally identified rhizomatic network which operated as an autonomous and alternative public sphere of dialogue and cooperation, concerned with researching and communicating the meanings of the Gdansk Shipyard cultural heritage. While Synergia 99 and the municipal administration worked more or less together with a support of external experts, the Artists' Colony functioned parallel, yet, independently of them and focused more on engaging the shipyard's workers and Gdansk citizens to the process. Artistic colonizers of the post-shipyard's land were constructing social relations and platforms for dialogic interactions. In that way, they acted as a medium, allowing this derelict space to project its own voice concerning its cultural and historic identity. As a consequence, artists could learn and communicate political knowledge related to the issues of the shipyard's cultural heritage and to engage the public in the alternative planning process.

This publicly shared political knowledge, referred by Virno (1996) as general or public intellect is an important resource of the radical planning. The publicness of this intellect blurs the rigid division of labour disciplines and dependence on rules endowed with coercive power. Simultaneously it fosters personal inter-dependence as well as demands more responsibility from individuals participating in radical planning and transformative action. This rhizomatic organizational formation and its performance resonate some of the elements of the Actor-Network Theory associated with such scholars as Michel Callon, Bruno Latour or John Law. This constructivist approach to social theory explains how transient, material-semiotic networks, exist as a whole and are involved in continuous creation of meanings (Latour, 2005). Actor-network involves a vast number of translations, however, we argue understood differently than by the artists in the Artists' Colony. Michel Callon associates translations with a forum of actors engaged in discursive process concerning performance of network and includes problematization, interestment, enrollment and mobilization of allies (Callon, 1986). For us it means a process of interpreting reality through various communicative symbols and acts and fits more within the Jurgen Habermas's Theory of Communicative Action.

We argue that the artists have succeeded to build a "communication bridge" connecting this closed down place with the rest of the city, simultaneously transforming public perception of the Gdansk Shipyard. With time, artistic actions carried out at the shipyard premises have attracted public attention. From 2005, the shipyard's cranes began to appear in the public visual sphere, including the posters of rock concerts and festivals or public charitable funds and most recently become the new iconic symbols of modern Gdansk. Today, local citizens associate themselves with the shipyard's post-industrial landscape and its huge cranes, and subsequently, postulate their formal protection.

At the beginning of 2012, the Mayor of Gdansk has invited representatives of the Artists' Colony to the newly established Young City's Stakeholders' Board, formalized space aimed to meet, exchange information and ideas on the post-shipyard urban regeneration process among developers, municipal administration, existing and operating Gdansk Shipyard board, Solidarity Trade Union, Solidarity Center Foundation, the European Solidarity Center as well as other cultural and artistic organizations. It could be argued that these highly qualified artistic "colonizers" have gained social trust and thus represent reliable partners for consultation over heritage alongside Gdansk citizens, developers, urban planners and politicians, concerning the post-shipyard regeneration. It seems that the common creation and utilization of public knowledge indeed creates a basis for mutual trust, an important factor for undertaking

and implementing joint actions. The meetings of Stakeholders Board are held on monthly basis, and much of the presentations and discussions concern the issues of the historic and cultural heritage preservation. In September last year, the detailed inventory of the shipyard's cranes, completed by the staff of the municipal administration, was presented at the Young City's Stakeholders' Board and two months later made public on the municipal web site. After discussions, the decisions on the concrete planning procedures of their preservation were collectively made, including financial decisions. This time, however, the Gdansk's citizens have mobilized to put pressure upon the local government to protect shipyard's heritage. That includes, Gdansk's youth that has formed Facebook-based active network called "NO – for the Shipyard destruction" which already incorporates around 2,000 participants.

Analysing effectiveness of the Artists' Colony performance related to the preservation of the cultural heritage within the scheme of the Gdansk Shipyard regeneration, we argue that its success has depended upon the rhizomatic and dialogic social organization in which artists with cultural, academic as well as social institutions and the media, have succeeded to bring this closed down industrial plant to the public sphere of dialogue and to build a resource of the shared knowledge concerning the shipyard's historical and cultural context as a fundamental basis for an effective continuation of the regeneration with consideration of cultural heritage issues.

It is important to acknowledge that the artists have not come to defend shipbuilding production but accepted the end of an industrial era and have never questioned that fact. They have understood that something new has to be created and in this context, they have somehow inscribed themselves into a consequence of transformation of these areas. This could have meant that they could be valuable partners from the beginning for both, developers and the city authorities. The artists did not act against the plans of the Gdansk authorities and developers but rather tried to influence their decisions indirectly by approaching the wider public with an alternative concepts. Over ten years, the artists managed to convince the public about the high value of industrial and political heritage as the great potential for the future development of this place. Currently, every aspect of the post-shipyard regeneration is publicly controlled and discussed in context of the heritage protection in search for effective solutions. For that, we argue that artists created and applied more effective method, concerning the revitalization of post-shipyard land than businesses and bureaucrats combined.

Note

1. Fragment of the text from the mural *Shipyard* of Iwona Zajac (2004).

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